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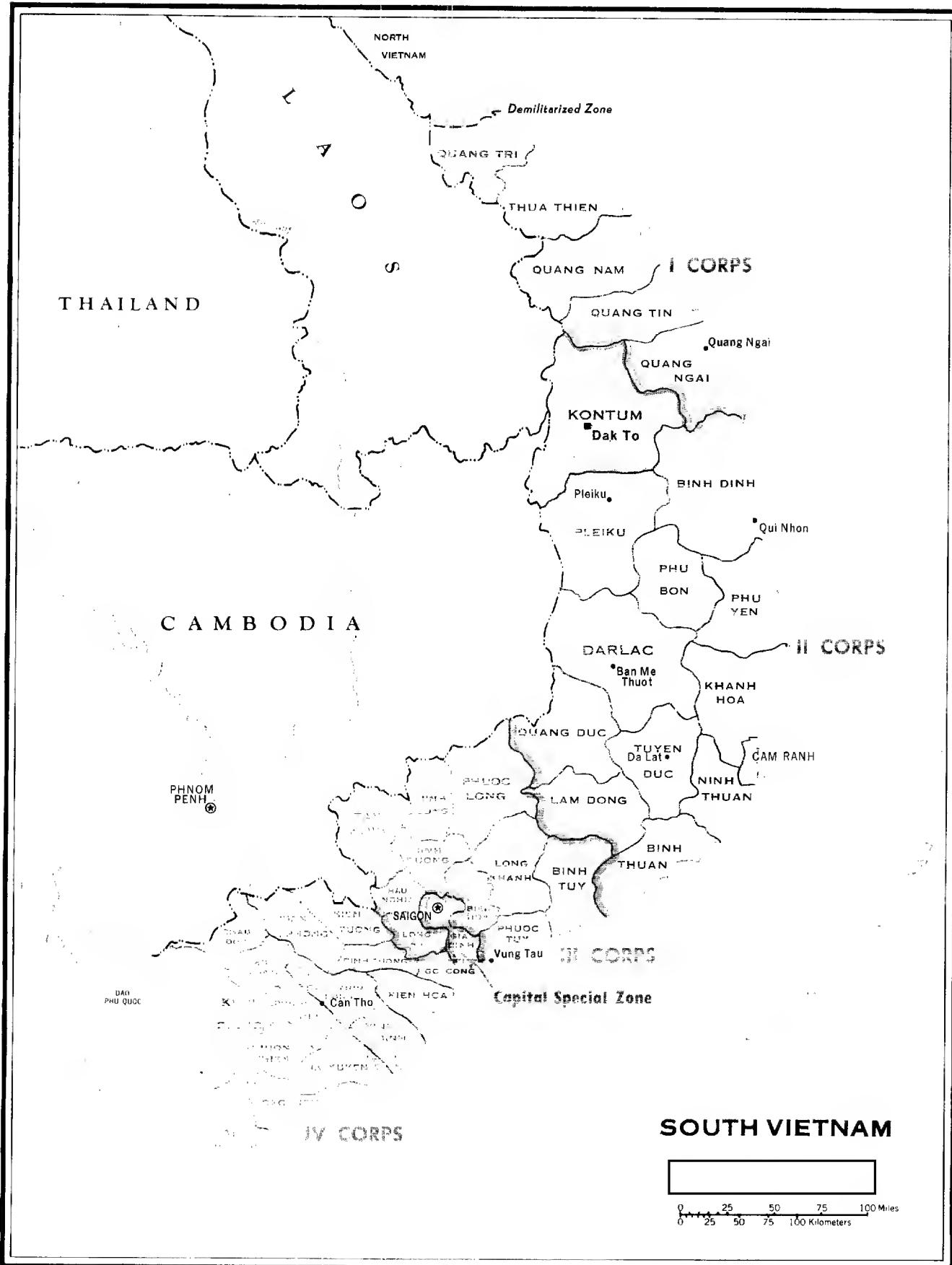
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[South Vietnam: Communist forces launched several sharp attacks on 14 August, indicating that they may be setting the stage for a larger scale offensive.

Mortar attacks were directed against two allied positions in Kontum Province, both near Dak To. Four positions in the provinces west and north-east of Saigon were hit by mortar and rocket barrages. In addition, US Marines fought a series of battles with North Vietnamese troops along the Demilitarized Zone and reported killing 50.

* * * *

A prominent leftist politician in Saigon is displaying interest in a "third force" movement.

Former economy minister Au Truong Thanh, who was disqualified as a presidential candidate because of alleged Marxist views, [redacted]

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[redacted] that a group of "true nationalists" who could "bridge the chasm" between the government and the Communists was the first requisite for peace. Thanh said he believed this was why the Communists had created their new Alliance, but he discounted it as a genuine "third force" vehicle. He predicted instead the emergence of a coalition of students, trade unionists, Catholic intellectuals, and Buddhists. *

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In a possibly related move, [redacted]

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[redacted] a group of politicians working to form a new political party which will advocate a three-stage peace platform. The party hopes to attract support among both Buddhists and Catholics and to test the government's reaction by filing for official recognition. Thanh reportedly has also been named by pro-Communist sources as an acceptable third force leader. [redacted]

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[redacted] (Map)]

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USSR-Czechoslovakia-Poland: Top-ranking Soviet military officers have been participating in the exercise taking place near Czechoslovakia's borders.

TASS announced yesterday that Soviet Defense Minister Grechko, Warsaw Pact commander Marshal Yakubovsky, and the Soviet Army's political chief, General Yepishev, were in Dresden on 13 August for the exercise. The pact chief of staff, Soviet General Shtemenko, was reported to be in Poland on 14 August.

Moscow probably is using the exercise as a vehicle for keeping large forces in the border areas in order to threaten Czechoslovakia. Yesterday, a travel restriction covering the southeast quadrant of East Germany was extended to 1 September. This indicates that Soviet and East German troops operating in this area are not preparing to return to their garrisons soon. This general area has been off limits to allied liaison mission personnel since shortly after Soviet troops began to move into it in May.

[Budapest radio announced yesterday that Hungarian and Soviet forces in Hungary are also conducting a joint communications exercise.]

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West Germany - Czechoslovakia: West Germany continues to exercise extreme caution in its efforts to improve relations with Czechoslovakia.

A plan to set up a West German - Czechoslovak study commission on the Munich Agreement has been abandoned, [redacted]

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[redacted] on the grounds that it is politically too difficult for the Czechs to do anything in common with West Germany.

The commission was designed to resolve differences over the agreement and thereby to remove an impediment to the eventual normalization of relations. Prague has insisted on a renunciation of the agreement ab initio, but Bonn has been willing to state only that it is no longer valid. [redacted]

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[redacted] Bonn would content itself for the time being with a unilateral study.

[redacted] also exhibited concern that foreign office State Secretary Lahr's visit to the Brno trade fair in early September, at Czechoslovak invitation, would provide the Soviets with another opportunity to object to West German "meddling." Moscow has seized on recent visits of prominent West Germans for this purpose.

Re-emphasizing West German interest in Czechoslovakia, [redacted] government is prepared, without taking initiatives of its own, to do whatever the Czechs believe the traffic will bear politically to expand contacts and improve economic relations. It is clear, however, that West German officials are reconciled to the likelihood of little immediate overt progress in the building of closer ties. [redacted]

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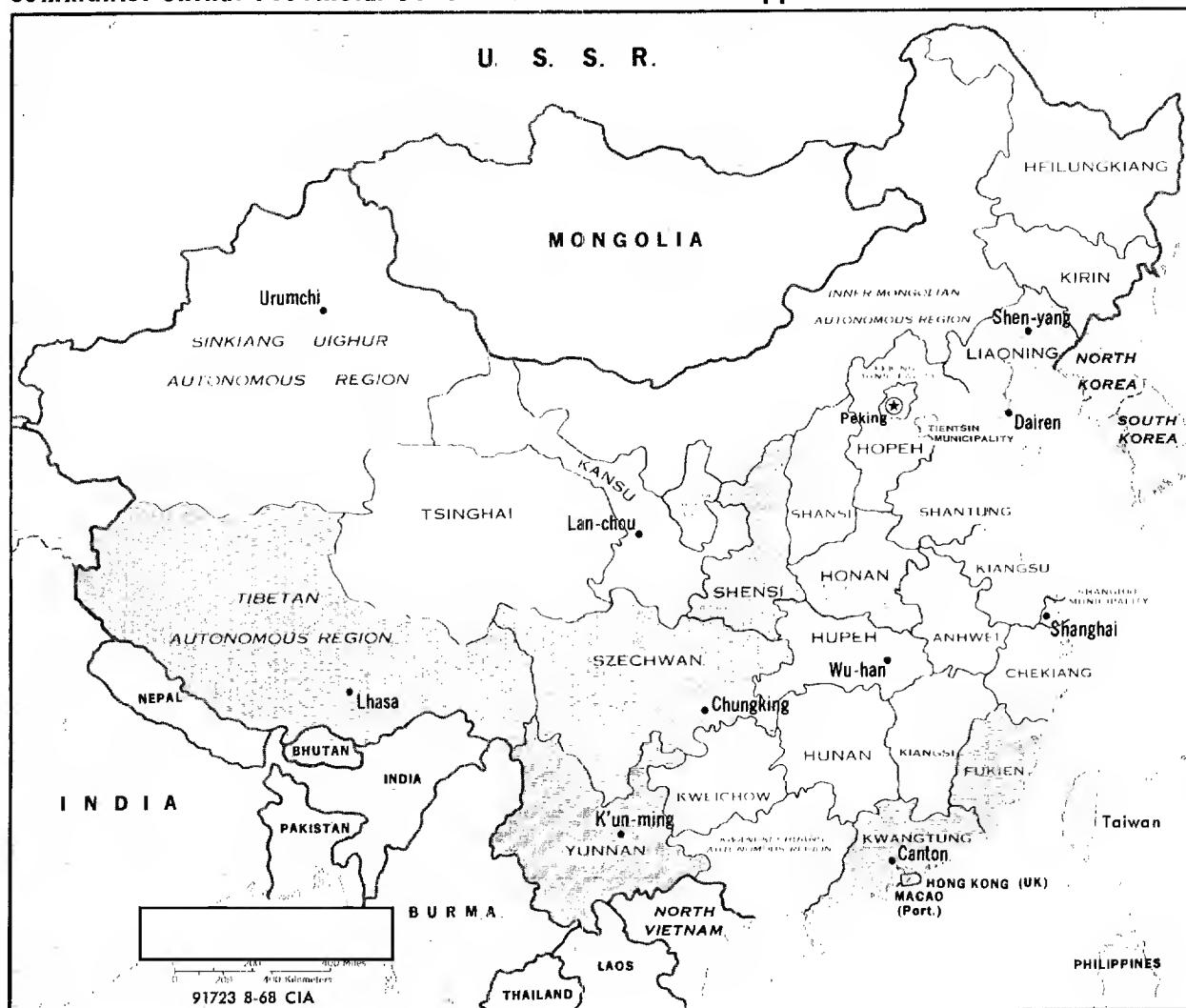
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Communist China: Provincial Governments Continue to Suppress Red Guards



- Red Guards have been disbanded
- Red Guards continue fighting
- "Provincial revolutionary committee" formed

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Communist China: More provincial governments are suppressing or dissolving Red Guard and Revolutionary Rebel organizations in the wake of recent directives to end factional violence.

Many of these Red Guard organizations are the same shock troops sent out to the provinces by the radical leaders in Peking early in the Cultural Revolution to attack and discredit local party and government officials. The variety of tactics used and the uneven progress of the new movement to weaken the Red Guards suggest, however, that the regime is not yet in full agreement on how vigorously to proceed. It may also be that it believes that different situations require different remedies.

In three provinces--Kirin, Liaoning, and Honan--both conservative and radical Red Guard organizations have been disbanded outright. The official rationale given for this extreme action is simply that these organizations are no longer "suitable." The abrupt manner in which these once-powerful groups are being dissolved suggests that local authorities in these provinces are in firm control and have unqualified Peking backing.

In Kwangtung, however, the militant Red Flag Red Guards manage to retain an organizational identity and to resist the combined forces of the army, the local government authorities, and their arch rival--the establishment-oriented East Wind faction. According to posters, the Red Flags have repeatedly appealed to their former backers in Peking, including Mao's wife, for protection against army brutality. Thus far these appeals have had no effect. Instead, the army's campaign has been developing momentum, and seems to have created an atmosphere of near terror in Canton in recent days. [redacted]

[redacted] Canton's jails are full, drumhead trials are conducted daily, and many persons--not just Red Flags--are being summarily executed.

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A more subtle tactic adopted in recent weeks in some cities is to downgrade the importance of student Red Guards by dispatching so-called "worker-peasant propaganda teams" to universities to impose discipline on students. Peking has given heavy propaganda play to Mao's gift of mangoes to the worker-peasant team stationed at Tsinghua University. The university earlier in the Cultural Revolution served as a headquarters for a particularly powerful and militant network of Red Guards operating throughout the country. Renewed attempts are also being made to disperse older students by assigning those who were prevented during the Cultural Revolution from graduating from high school or college to government jobs or state farms under army control.

Despite the efforts to suppress the Red Guard activities in some provinces, however, authorities in many other provinces have failed to act firmly, possibly because they have not yet been authorized to do so. Armed factional fighting continues in Fukien Province, for example, with little interference from the army. Sporadic fighting is still reported from the provinces of Shensi, Szechwan, Tibet, and Yunnan.

A new "revolutionary" government formed in Yunnan Province on 13 August presumably will have as its first task the curbing of rival factions. Like most other provincial governments formed in the past year, the one in Yunnan is headed by a senior military officer. His first vice chairman is a long-time security official who has served as a top troubleshooter for the regime. [REDACTED]

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(Map) [REDACTED]

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Thailand: Factional maneuvering is increasing within the regime as it prepares for next year's national legislative elections.

Several government figures claim that there has been little progress in organizing a government political party because key government leaders are "hopelessly divided." Party organizers are particularly discouraged over what they believe is a lack of leadership on the part of Prime Minister Thanom. They fear that with party planning at a virtual standstill, potential supporters will have no choice but to back nongovernment parties.

The regime's failure to support a common slate of candidates in next month's important municipal elections in Bangkok is a clear sign that personal rivalries are still more important than hardheaded political calculations. A victory by the Bangkok-based opposition Democratic Party could make it more difficult for the government to control the legislative elections.

Meanwhile, Deputy Prime Minister Praphat is apparently building a personal power base in the countryside. He recently assumed control of the government-affiliated Free Peoples' League and has given it the go-ahead to organize nationally. Praphat evidently hopes to use the league to dominate the government political party. Other factions, centered on Police Director General Prasert and Minister of Economic Development Pote, are also lining up support but they are not as far along as Praphat.

Although politicking will continue, some accommodation almost certainly will be worked out to enable the regime to weather the transitional period. In addition, the regime has demonstrated a good deal of political ability in delaying legislation allowing open political activity and in making concessions over contentious public issues. [redacted]

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Zambia: President Kaunda's ban on the minor opposition United Party on 14 August probably is an effort to stem growing political violence.

The ban followed a mob attack on officials of the governing United National Independence Party. One official was killed--the sixth to die in party clashes within six months.

Politics by intimidation at the ward level is common in Zambia, but political violence, especially by the United Party, has increased with the approach of parliamentary elections to be held before next March. Unconfirmed but plausible reports that the party received funds from white southern African governments may also have influenced Kaunda's decision.

The ban in itself does not threaten the future of political opposition parties. The release on 14 August of an imprisoned leader of Zambia's other opposition party, the African National Congress, is probably an attempt to give meaning to Kaunda's statement that the ban is not meant to eliminate "freedom of expression and association" of political parties "organized in a legal manner."

The major disquieting feature raised by the ban is that Lozi tribesmen from the west, a center of United Party strength, may view Kaunda's action as a direct slap at them. The Lozis were the main losers during last summer's political maneuvering within the governing party that emphasized tribal differences and aroused emotionalism. Should the Lozi tribe become increasingly disenchanted with the national government, greater violence than the present ban seems designed to prevent could result.

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Iran: The Shah is pushing a "revolution" in higher education following student demonstrations during the past school year and rising criticism of the universities.

Under the aegis of the newly formed Ministry of Science and Higher Education, draft reform plans are now being discussed by experts from the ministry, the Plan Organization, and the universities. In order to aid the "revolution" and to give the impression of decisive action, the heads of Iran's eight institutions of higher learning "resigned" in early August.

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[redacted] a major purpose of this sudden activity--nearly a year after the Shah announced that educational reform would become a plank in the "White Revolution"--is to quiet student dissatisfaction before the new school year begins. Students at many Iranian universities held demonstrations last fall and again in the spring to protest higher tuition fees, the quality of university education in general, and the lack of full-time professors.

At a recent educational conference, the Shah repeatedly emphasized the importance of convincing the students that government is making efforts to improve their education. He hit hard on the need for more full-time professors, and for a "free dialogue" between students and faculty--the lack of which has been a major defect in Iranian education.

New Minister of Science and Higher Education Rahnema has indicated his intention to introduce a more flexible "American-style" course system, hire many more qualified professors, charge tuition only to those who can pay, and provide special incentives for those specializing in science and technology. Several of these reforms had been initiated earlier at a slower pace, but apparently the Shah believes that the climate of student unrest and the demands of Iranian development programs necessitate more rapid change. [redacted]

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Greece: The government reportedly plans a full-scale roundup of leftists in the light of information linking the man who tried to assassinate Prime Minister Papadopoulos with exiled Andreas Papandreou's Center Union Youth Organization. Papandreou's reported remarks praising the attempt may also have induced security authorities to take energetic action in order to discourage further violent attacks on the regime. The assassin may be connected with a small, poorly organized resistance group in Paris, but there is as yet no clear evidence that ties this group to Papandreou's opposition efforts.

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Japan - North Korea: A high-level delegation of the Japan Communist Party will leave for North Korea on 17 August to participate in Pyongyang's 20th anniversary celebrations on 9 September. This is the first such mission to Pyongyang by the Japanese Communists since before they broke with Peking early in 1966. Discussions between the two parties will cover a variety of problems currently plaguing the Communist world.

Their meetings are likely to focus on the theme of independence and equality of world Communist parties.

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Bolivia: President Barrientos, for the second time in two weeks, has threatened to resign. His first threat was prompted by problems with civilian politicians; this time he is alleging lack of military support following his changes in the armed forces high command. Armed Forces Commander Ovando can probably dissuade him again, as he did on 3 August, but Barrientos is subject to severe emotional ups and downs, and his threats should not be totally dismissed.

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Sudan: Large swarms of locusts threaten widespread destruction of the cotton crop, the Sudan's major export. According to the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, some 250,000 square miles--about one fourth of the country--have already been affected, and the locusts are likely to be in their most active stage by September when the newly planted cotton crop is well started. Some swarms have already attacked the sugar cane in the northeast. So far, the Sudanese have done virtually nothing to control the locusts, and government officials have voiced little public or private concern. Unless the locusts in the Sudan are brought under control, the rest of East Africa will be seriously affected despite active efforts there. [redacted]

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